

**Official Minutes of the City of Cottonwood
Historic Preservation Commission Regular Meeting
Held, May 11, 2011, at 6 P.M. at the Council Chambers
826 N. Main Street, Cottonwood, Arizona 86326**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Elinski called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Historic Preservation Commission Members Present:

Tim Elinski, Chair

Glenda Farley, Commissioner

Greg Ruland, Vice Chair (arrived 6:13 pm)

Karen Leff, Commissioner

Ryan Bigelow, Commissioner

Carol Anne Warren, Commissioner

Absent:

Annabel Sclipa, Commissioner

Staff Members Present:

Charlie Scully, Community Development, Long Range Planner

Kyla Allen, Executive Assistant to the City Manager

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 13, 2011

Motion: *To approve the minutes from April 13 as written*

Move: *Commissioner Warren*

Second: *Commissioner Farley*

Vote: *Unanimous*

4. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS AND UPDATES

No reports or updates.

5. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No public comments.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING DRAFT OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCE FOR COTTONWOOD

Planner Scully provided an 18-page draft ordinance to commission members. He reported he has discussed the current version of the ordinance with Mr. Frankeberger from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). One of several requirements to become a Certified Local Government (CLG) is the City must have a preservation ordinance in place. Mr. Frankeberger has been very forthcoming with suggestions and assistance though his office does have reduced staff. The current ordinance is the framework which covers the basic issues. It has many similarities to other communities which are currently certified local governments, and also covers details unique to the City of Cottonwood. Planner Scully is presenting it to the Commissioners for their input. Chairman Elinski asked what other details need to be included before it is taken before the Council. Planner Scully responded right now the ordinance needs to meet the minimum requirements to meet the goals of the CLG, and address various details at a later date. To elaborate, in Cottonwood we will need to address different standards for different era structures so that structures from the 1920's are not painted with the same brush as post WWII structures, etc. The variety of other items to be included will take much more time.

Chairman Elinski expressed concern with the possibility that being within a historic preservation overlay may inhibit a property owner's ability to perform normally routine and common actions to their property. Commissioner Leff mentioned tax incentives. Planner Scully stated this will require education of the public to teach them the benefits of participation and get public buy-in. Commissioner Warren indicated she was not comfortable with expressing the possibility that being listed as a historic property would increase property values.

Chairman Elinski suggested the topic of how being a historic property benefits a property owner be addressed on a future agenda and invite a member of SHPO to further educate the commissioners.

In reviewing the current draft ordinance, Vice Chairman Ruland's only concern is the *Purpose* section, Section 309 (A). Vice Chair Ruland expressed Section 309(A)3. *Stabilize and/or improve property values, and protect existing investment involving the restoration and preservation of historic resources* as a part of the commissions "duties" should not come in to play when the commission is making decisions on the requirements of improvement or granting historic preservation status to interested property owners. The commission should not have to determine whether or not it will contribute to the economy but rather determine whether a property is it a historic structure. We are interested in complying with a comprehensive community plan. Vice Chair Ruland feels the ordinance needs to be consistent with the comprehensive general plan in the event it is challenged in the future. Planner Scully responded he will strike Section 309(A)3 and 5.

Commissioners discussed a landmark case involving privately owned NY Grand Central Station which was to be torn down to build a sky scraper. This case went all the way to the Supreme Court which ruled, under New York's landmark law, the private property owner could not tear it down. An element of historic preservation does address privately owned properties where public importance/interest takes precedence.

Commissioners discussed Demolition Permit processes and the "delay" period, in particular, the length of the delay process desired (90 days vs. 6 months). Planner Scully will do some research to find out what period of time other communities allow with the commissions goal being not to burden the public with a restrictive time constraint but allow the commission enough time to look for alternatives to demolition including effects to contributing properties versus non-contributing properties.

Chairman Elinski asked what happens if the commission says no to a remodel or demolition request. Planner Scully stated the desired approach is to find a solution and not strictly deny the permit. This is more of a negotiation tool, based on the standards of a property's historic integrity. On demolition permits the delay period is a waiting period to try to find funding sources, someone who can purchase and restore the property, etc. until all avenues have been exhausted and the demolition permit is then issued. For remodel's the application is more of an inquiry process to see if the builder's plans meet HP requirements and if there are changes required, can a compromise be reached. Planner Scully will research other CLG communities and the permit processes they use.

From here the historic preservation ordinance will be fine tuned, and be forwarded to the state for their review and suggestions. Once those have been made it will go to the Planning and Zoning Commission for several public meetings, then to the City Attorney, and then the City Council, in that order. This will also be done with some sort of property owner outreach in a separate educational focus meeting to ensure they are relatively comfortable with the process. Chairman Elinski would like to hear back from SHPO then have a public education meeting to get some input and provide the public information as to why we are forming this ordinance, etc.

Commissioner Farley made some inquiries about forms and the lack of similarity. She noted it seemed to her it would be easier to use something similar to the form the State uses to ensure uniformity. Vice Chair Ruland stated he will look at the State form to confirm it meets our needs. Commissioner Farley reported this type of form was filled out for all the commercial properties in the Cottonwood historic district, however the State form may have been updated since then as this was several years ago. Planner Scully felt this was more of a formatting issue rather than content and this will be part of a development process that will contain more forms, etc. Basically the designee will be walked through the process by staff. One of the requirements of the CLG is the city keep an inventory of properties via something that works electronically so it is not just

in a 3-ring binder as it currently is. There is a link to procedures for photographing for the inventory i.e. resolutions etc. that would be wise for us to tie in to our permitting process.

Commissioner Scully reported Community Development is hoping, through the upcoming budget process, to purchase updated software and integrate it with current city software to interface with waterlines, district requirements, photos, etc. to avoid duplicity of tasks and have the data available for multiple departments use.

Vice Chair Ruland indicated great satisfaction with #3 under landmark designation criteria on page 6 of the draft ordinance. He stated this will eventually become the biggest part of the commission's job as well as the appeal process. Both of these will be more fleshed out in the future, in particular to reduce any politically motivated decisions.

Commissioner Farley asked how many contributing elements have to disappear before we lose the historic designation? Planner Scully reported this is a very important question where the State will be of great assistance. Commissioners expressed concern that the upcoming remodel of the Old Town Jail may cause us to lose our historic criteria. Planner Scully will call the State Historic Preservation Office to determine this. Vice Chair Ruland stated the Commission really has no control over that until the ordinance is in place.

Chairman Elinks stated he felt the commission is comfortable with the document. Once the requested changes are made he would like it sent to SHPO for their review and then have a workshop. Planner Scully stated he will try to schedule SHPO within the next month. Vice Chair Ruland suggested some P&Z Commissioners might benefit from the workshop as well. Having a joint session would be appropriate. Perhaps the meeting can be set up for the P&Z Commission and the HPC members will join them.

Commissioner Farley stated most property owners in Old Town aren't aware they are in a commercial historic district or that there was a survey of the properties. Providing property owners with the information on their property via mail might be an excellent way to open a dialogue with the property owners in the near future.

B. FOLLOW UP REPORTS AND DISCUSSION REGARDING ACTIVITIES FOR NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION MONTH. (MAY 2011)

Chairman Elinski reported he attended the Sizzling Salsa event which went well. There were not as many people as at previous events but it is basically a new event. He felt it may not have been as well publicized. Commissioner Leff reported thought the Scavenger Hunt had only a few participants, they had a great time. Many attendees wanted more info on the bootlegging. This activity definitely needs to be promoted

more in the future. Chairman Elinski expressed his thanks to all members of the Commission who attended and made the event a success. He suggested if we can't piggy back the HPC activities with *Sizzling Salsa*, we can do it with another event such as *Walkin' On Main*, and flesh out our activities a bit more. Maybe get a little stage time for the raffle. *Walkin' on Main* would be a good city activity to do the raffle and walking tour. The State historic preservation month is in March. Commissioners Leff and Farley reported many of the historic flyers they placed in business windows last year are still up in old town.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- HPCs involvement in the Centennial and provide them a list of what is happening including local/state/county activities.
- Update on Old Town Jail Remodel
- Information on the possible demolition of the Parks and Recreation building

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: ***To adjourn the meeting.***

Move: ***Commissioner Warren***

Second: ***Commissioner Farley***

Vote: ***Unanimous***

Chairman Elinski adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.